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May Meetings.

From almost time immemorial the month of May seems to have been selected as a period of popular assemblies. Church bodies of various kinds and connections, non-ecclesiastical organisations, including, in recent years, labour unions, have made the month memorable by their annual celebrations. Doubtless, there is something in the springtime which inspires hope and suggests effort. Be that as it may, we think it as fitting as it is fortunate that such assemblies for mutual encouragement and stimulus should have their place in our ordered modern life.

Our own liberal churches and organisations contribute to this general concourse of societies. The term "May Meetings" suggests for many of our co-religionists across the water the Annual Meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Last year we were reminded of the common times which brought nearer in special kinship the kindred Association of our churches in America. To them the month of May is sacred because of many inspiring meetings for which it has provided the happy occasion, and this year the American Unitarian Association meets in May.

But this year the same month of May will have a special significance for us in the North of Ireland. One of our own Associations which has done much good work in the past will reach its jubilee year and proposes to celebrate its completion. Accordingly on May 2 and 3 gatherings have been arranged of a religious and also of a social character to mark off the Jubilee of the Ulster Unitarian Christian Association. Services will be held in the First Church, on May 2nd and will be conducted by the Rev. W. G. Tarrant, B.A., of London, the editor of "The Inquirer." He and Mr. Richard Downing Holt, of Liverpool will be the guests of the Association at a Reception in the Central Hall, on Monday, May 3rd, while both will speak at a Public Meeting on the same evening. Knowing how much the May assemblies serve to rouse and interest good people elsewhere we most strongly hope and believe that these special May meetings of our own will be provocative of much good and worthily inaugurate the second half-century of the Association's useful life. We sincerely trust that all its celebrations may be successful in themselves and rich in their results for our cause.

Notes of the Month.

Our readers will remember that during the earlier part of the Winter special services were held in our Belfast Churches with the object of deepening the spiritual life of the people. Those services have met with a measure of success. It is felt however that the effort must not end there and that it needs to be emphasised in the country districts as well as in the city. To meet this need therefore, now that more genial weather is possible, special arrangements are afoot to hold a united gathering in the Meeting House, Templepatrick, on Sunday afternoon, 16th May, at 4 o'clock. The Moderator (Rev. W. H. T. Tilson, M.A.), will be the preacher. As many country people journeyed to town to participate in the services there so now it is hoped the townspeople will journey to Templepatrick and assist them in their service. These are days of motors, and a motor drive to Templepatrick on the occasion will be well worth while. We are told that the Templepatrick congregation is doing all in its power to make such a visit pleasant for their visitors and among other things will invite all who come from a distance to remain for tea. We hope to see a goodly gathering.

* *

We were glad to see several of our Irish Ministers attending the Triennial Meetings of the National Conference held in Sheffield last month. Not only did the North make its contribution but Cork, for the first time for many years, had a representative at the Conference, no less than three persons, including the minister, making the long journey to Sheffield. As if in honour of the occasion the latter city was on its best behaviour and visitors who had thought of it hitherto as an entirely dirty town of the industrial order were agreeably surprised at the brilliance of the sunshine and the attractive character of the Conference setting. Not unnaturally the atmosphere of brightness around was reflected in the character of the meetings themselves. Warmth and cordiality, good-will and accessibility were in evidence at the outset and created the requisite beginning for a successful Conference.

* *

In the present month a very important Co-Operative Congress is to assemble in Belfast. Preparations for the reception of more than two thousand delegates from other lands have been in active operation for many weeks and everything points to a very memorable series of meetings. So far as we know this is the first occasion on which the Congress has met in Belfast and naturally the hosts and hostesses are desirous of doing justice to the great event. The speakers at the meetings will include representative men and women at home and abroad. A United Service will be held on the afternoon of May 23rd in the large Assembly Hall, Belfast. It will be of interest to our readers to know that the Rev. H. J. Rossington has received and accepted an invitation to preach the sermon at that inaugural service.

* *

Some of our readers will be familiar with the name of Bishop Ferencz, the greatly-beloved head of the Hungarian Unitarian Church. Now well over ninety years of age, he still retains an interest not alone in his own corner of God's vineyard, where he has done such devoted service, but also in Unitarianism in other lands. In a short time he will have completed an episcopate of fifty years, a remarkable achievement indeed. Doubtless, he will then be the recipient of heartfelt greetings and good wishes from many quarters. We, for our part, would wish to join in the chorus of congratulations, and we would suggest that when the Ulster Unitarian Christian Association holds its Public Meeting shortly it should send an official letter of sympathy and good-will to the 'grand old man' of Hungary.

* *

We would ask our readers to keep in mind that popular annual event, the Sunday School Conference. Although not held till the first Saturday in June we desire to give this early notice by way of preparing for a largely-attended and successful assembly.

Address Broadcast from Belfast by Rev. M. Watkins, on Sunday Evening, April 10th.

I would have you go with me for a few moments to-night to the Mount of Christ's transfiguration.

Some have looked upon this narrative of the Transfiguration as a legend, and some have accepted it as a supernatural visitation.

Both views are I think misconceptions. There is something here too real for legend, and something far too human to set it apart from experience and daily life. The truth that lies behind the transfiguration of Jesus I am persuaded is not grasped by isolating it from the rest of his life—it can be helpfully interpreted only in the light of what has gone before and what comes after.

In the chapter preceding the one where we have the actual transfiguration recounted, we are told that Jesus spent a memorable time in Caesarea Philippi with his disciples. There he inquired of them "Who do men say that I am?" and receiving their reply he further asked "But who say ye that I am" and we get the reply of Peter: "Thou art the Christ the Son of "the Living God."

And he charged them to impart this secret to no man; but from that time he began to show them that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes and be killed.

Six days after, he went in company with Peter and James and his brother John up to the Mount of Transfiguration, where he made it his will—his final resolve to go to Jerusalem and his death.

This confirmation of his resolve to do the will of God at all costs is the basis of the "Transfiguration," and we see in it not only the cause of the glory of the light divine which surrounded him, but also a possible explanation of the message: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Now how true is it to life, that we do not ascend mounts of transfiguration on the wings of mere religious rapture and emotion, but by the uplifting strength of calm and deliberate resolutions..

The good soldier on the field of battle is not made strong and steady by momentary experiences of excitement, but by the exacting time spent in years of training and by feats of endurance, and disciplined watchfulness.

The supposed easy way to power in any walk of life is a pitfall; as is the luxurious chat about the deeper things misleading if we think we are thereby touching with healing hands the wounds of the spirit.

Let us then be quite clear, that it is not the idea possessing us, the vision vouchsafed to us, the personality we reverence, the cause we espouse that transfigures.

The transfiguration is possible only when we resolve of our own free will to embrace the righteousness of God—then it is the light within causes our face to shine, reflecting the glory of God. And that I am persuaded was the source of the shining light that surrounded Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. **He resolved to endure the Cross.**

The picture thus drawn of Jesus and the Transfiguration is not one of him lost in rapturous contemplation of God. It is a vision of him looking steadfastly with fearless eyes towards the Jerusalem Road.—with its betrayal, arrest and trial, culminating in death.

This is its challenge to us, with its emphasis on the part **"Will"** plays in religion and life. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and these things shall be added unto you."

Thus Jesus appeals firstly to the will of man—the will to seek so that he may find; and this stressing of the will is the need of our time.

We long for this thing or the other, but our longing is only a royal road to our discomfiture, unless we also will by

patient toil to realise what we desire. This is the magic of the transfiguration and power of the Gospel, and is true from the beginning to the end of life.

If a man would upbuild his soul unto salvation he will find it can be compassed only so far as he wills to put himself—his life in harmony with the Will of God.

To this there is no alternative, and only as man is steadfast in willing things good and true can the work of salvation be accomplished. And what is true of the individual is equally true of society. To trust in new conditions merely, or fresh legislation, indeed to place assurance in anything that overlooks the purification of the mind or the strengthening of the will is to court failure.

Jesus knew this as few men have done, for by his constant practice of going apart from his disciples to commune and to pray we see he went to renew his mind and strengthen his will in the service of his Father. And thus it was he found his Mount of recurring Transfiguration.

To us who seek to follow in his steps we shall find as he did, that that which best strengthens our wills is the renewing of heart and mind at the same source. Should we then need the magic of a time or name to spur us on we have both—for what time is more opportune than the present, or what name like that of the Master's ?

In the early days of Christianity we are told that for the sake of the "Name" men went forth to do and to dare. That name belonged to Jesus and without doubt it led many to the Mount of their Transfiguration. So may it lead us in our time.

I do not fear to tread the path that those I love have long since trod ;

I do not fear to pass the gates and stand before the living God ,

In this world's fight I've done my part, if God be God, He knows it well ;

He will not turn His back on me and send me down to blackest hell

Because I have not prayed aloud and shouted in the market place.

'Tis what we do, not what we say that makes us worthy of His grace.

Triennial Conference held at Sheffield.

The fifteenth Triennial Conference met in Sheffield on 12th April, and continued until the following Friday evening. It is not too much to say of it that it was one of the most successful Conferences held and the Sheffield people are again to be congratulated upon their organising ability and their large-hearted hospitality. The weather was glorious. In the restricted space at our disposal we cannot do more than take a passing glance at such a big event and would advise those of our readers who would know more of it to consult the fuller reports of *The Christian Life* and *The Inquirer*. The Rev. C. J. Street and Mrs. Street received the 400 representatives in the Lower Cutler's Hall in the afternoon of the 12th, and this reception was followed by a civic reception which the Lord Mayor accorded the Conference at the Town Hall. It will be seen therefore that the social side of the conference was not neglected and a large number of delegates were welcomed by the Lord Mayor in the drawing-room of the Town Hall. Everyone spoke of the brilliant sunshine and everyone seemed surprised that Sheffield should so depart from its tradition of smoke and smuts and be seen in all the glory of the Spring sun.

Lord Parmoor, K.C.V.O., spoke at the public meeting on "Locarno, Geneva, and the League of Nations." It is all very well to talk about disarmament in the abstract ; disarmament is essential if peace is to be assured said the speaker and he proceeded to condemn the spirit of national intrigue

and that twin-brother of warfare—secret diplomacy. We must nerve ourselves, he said, to fresh efforts in support of the League of Nations, the only barrier that stood between civilisation and the ruin of warfare. It was an unhappy commencement of Treaty negotiations to choose Locarno as the place of meeting and not Geneva. To the world at large, and to all the members of the League, it was heralded from Locarno, and was so understood, that a special Assembly would be summoned for the only purpose of admitting Germany to membership in the League, and thus making the Treaty of Locarno an Operative Treaty. There was no suggestion of any outstanding unsettled difficulty, or that any other matter was to be considered at the special meeting of the Assembly than the entry of Germany, and no hint that, as an answer to the entry of Germany, the Council would require re-constitution. If such a matter had been present to the minds of the negotiators at Locarno, it should have been known to Germany. This had been declared not to be the case. Although the Assembly had been called for a special purpose the matters for which it had been called—the entry of Germany into the League—was never brought before it, and the meeting ended in failure. It was still more surprising that the special matter of the entry of Germany was never brought before the Council in any form, but became the subject of informal discussion. The truth was, said the speaker, that the old principles of secret diplomacy were used and those who ardently desired a new spirit in international relationships were not surprised at the resulting failure. "As to the future," proceeded his Lordship. There must not be a risk of a further failure at Geneva in September after the experience of March. The appointment of a Commission is a doubtful experiment to solve a difficulty which should, in the first instance be freely discussed in the open air of the Assembly. One thing is imperative : that this country should state definitely, and without delay, that the only question, in the first instance, is the entry of Germany into the League, and that this entry is not to be made the occasion either of secret understandings or covert intrigues. It is in this direction that the real danger lies, and it must be faced and answered. If the Locarno terms are to be really maintained all questions of the future reconstrution of the Council should be held over until Germany has taken her place in the Assembly, and as a permanent member of the Council, capable of using her influence on both bodies. Publicity is indispensable. It would be foolish to accept the soothing phrases of political commonplaces on a matter of basic importance. A world organisation cannot be maintained without a world publicity and a definite opportunity of world discussion. It is the essence of the League principle that international matters may affect not merely the countries immediately in dispute, but the community of States who have signed the Covenant of the League.

The question of Church organisation came prominently to the front in the course of the proceedings. It is a question which will possibly be heard of again and again among our English brethren. On this occasion "Practical questions affecting our Church Life and Organisation," was the subject of a paper read by the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, M.A., B.D. He said there was in their church life not only a deep strain of independency but also a profound tendency towards an isolated individualism in thought and organisation. The demand for a more efficient and closely-knit organisation was a healthy sign. Even more important than an efficient machine was the power behind it. Organisation alone could not guarantee the continuity of the Spirit. Prophecy was a present

inspiration ; God breathed it hourly and daily into the life of the Church. Were they, amid the insistent calls of a Gospel of "Salvation by Doing," in danger of losing this ? They had not got over the strong re-action from the extravagancies of the evangelical revival. If they could link up their love of truth with the ancient ardours they might save a great truth for the Christian Church and pioneer the revival for which the world waited. Mrs. Sydney Martineau followed with a paper on "Practical Organisation—Our Need for To-day." She said they must examine their machinery, their scattered churches, district societies, and the bodies administering funds, and sacrifice non-essentials by taking the best of each. They must strengthen and multiply their churches, present a united front with efficient machinery. First of all they needed one organisation, a joining together of the National Conference and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. The Conference had leisure and opportunity which might be employed to greater advantage than heretofore in considering new schemes and new ventures. They could provide a council which would be like a dynamo —generate ideas, plans, and schemes which would stir their zeal and activity. She visualised one central body carrying on all the present functions of the Association but greatly strengthened by a change in its constitution. It would entirely supersede the present Council which had not fulfilled the purpose for which it was originally constituted. All was not well with them as they were and they must be bold with great remedies. As was to be expected a lively discussion followed and a resolution was passed asking the two bodies mentioned above to meet and consider if it would be possible for them to become one. In the meantime organisation proceeds very slowly.

It is not possible here to enumerate all the important questions discussed nor to name the influential persons by whom these questions were handled. But we might at any rate include a short paragraph from the remarkable address delivered by the President the Rev. C. J. Street, M.A. "We as Unitarians and Free Christians," said the President, "have much cause for rejoicing in the signs and movements of the times, which are unmistakably in our direction. We have been, and still are, the pioneers. The main body is steadily following along in the track which we have beaten out for them. The positions occupied by our grandfathers, if not even by our fathers, have long been occupied by the Churches which then refused to have anything to do with them then, or even recognise them as Christians. The Roman Catholic Church itself has not been unmoved by the stream of time, in spite of its motto, *Semper eadem*—always the same indeed in maintaining its separation from the rest of Christendom, a strange comment on its claim to be *Catholic*—but still inevitably influenced by the movement of thought. The Anglo-Catholics indeed are gravitating toward the Roman Church which is their natural home. The Modernists on the other hand are calmly taking our positions though with the least possible disturbance to their own comfort, and the Evangelical Free Churches are being permeated with a liberalism that has almost completely destroyed the old morbid theological dogmas of Human Depravity and Substitutional Sacrifice, of Election and Eternal Punishment, which were so familiar to many of us in our youth. *There is hope for Christianity yet.*

We conclude our account with a paragraph taken from the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* expressing an opinion of the people who had invaded their city for the purposes of the Conference.

This important conference is not merely a conference representative of what are called "Unitarian" congregations, but as its official title suggests

it includes all religious bodies which do not bind themselves by a definite creed. Its full designation "The National Conference of the members and friends of Unitarian, Liberal Christian, Free Christian, Presbyterian and other Non-Subscribing, and Kindred Congregations," clearly shows the comprehensiveness of its membership. It stands for great ideals in our social, national, and international life, and numbers among the members of its fifteenth triennial conference men and women of distinction in the intellectual life of the country.

Its discussions are bound to reach a high level of thought and purpose, and its pronouncements, on the great questions with which it will deal, will necessarily command respect and attention. At the risk of an offence against good taste, one is constrained to repeat a remark made outside the Channing Hall by a passer-by as group after group passed into the hall: "Who are these intellectual-looking and happy people?" That question exactly expressed what must have struck even a casusal observer. Certainly there was nothing "stodgy" about these folk Earnestness of purpose, strength of character, coupled with the *joie de vivre*, marked the alert bearing, vivacious speech, and vivid gestures of these men and women. As a study in personnel alone they were a set of people who stood out amongst the crowds through which they passed in Surrey Street. In one respect at least they set a fine example to other religious bodies. While intensely loyal to their own aspect of truth as they see it, they recognise that truth is many sided: and the sincerity and tenacity with which they hold their views are equalled by the spirit of courtesy, charity, and toleration with which they regard the opinions of others.

N.B.—All Communications should reach the Editor, Ardeevin, Cadogan Park, Belfast, not later than the 16th of the month preceding pubilcation.

The May-days of the Soul.

"All things are new: the buds, the leaves,
That gild the elm-tree's nodding crest;
And e'en the nest beneath the eaves:
There are no birds in last year's nest."

The true philosophy of Nature is a religious philosophy, that is, a philosophy binding us to God. The soul, standing within the grand Cathedral of God's material world, and gazing through it upward to the light, finds the earthly veil becoming transparent and the Universal Spirit seen no longer through a glass darkly, but Face to Face.

"There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream
The earth, and every common sight
To me did seem, apparelled in celestial light
The glory and the freshness of a dream."—

My heart with pleasure fills and dances with the daffodils. Life has its May-days, as well as the year. How different a thing life is according to our mood. The May-day of the intellect, when the pen cannot overtake the mind. ! when—

"Thought leaps out to wed with thought
Ere thought can wed itself with speech,"

when ideas throng "glad and thick as leaves upon a tree in primrose time," when we see "smiling upward from the page, the image of the thought within the soul." But these times are comparatively rare times, and it is more often February than May in our intellectual life. Dr. Martineau has a famous sermon on the Tides of the Spirit, showing the intermittency of the devout affections It is "the most difficult of tasks to **keep** heights which the soul is competent to gain." The Soul's Flower-time should never be allowed to pass without having left some noble fruit set. Is it not a commonplace to say that the May-days of the soul are most abundant and most glowing in youth, the May-time of life. ?

"Enjoy thy youth; it will not stay;
Enjoy the fragrance of thy prime,
For oh! it is not always May."

There are some writers who have found the Universe so full of God that life is nearly always May in their experience. Such men as Browning,

Emerson, Burroughs and Wordsworth "Central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation." What are the special characteristics which these men found in the life of the Universe, and how are they connected with the thought of religion.

The first characteristic of the life of the Universe is, that it is a life of enjoyment. "The Rivulet, delighting in its strength, ran with a young man's speed." The budding groves seemed eager to urge on the steps of June. The flowers enjoy the air they breathe. The bluecap in the apple tree cannot contain himself for glee, nor the lambs, in spring—"Scattering thy gladness without care, too blest with any one to pair; thyself thy own enjoyment." And all this life was praise to God, natural, unconscious praise, praise because the givers could not help giving it; their enjoyment their greatest praise, as ours should be; full and deep as that with which each morning the lark sang its hymn to God.

"Happy, happy Liver
With a soul as strong as a mountain river,
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver."

The second characteristic of the life of the Universe is its quietude. She has joy, ecstasy in her life, but it is untroubled ecstasy. We are "pressed by heavy laws," tormented by doubt, and rent by struggle against conditions which we will not obey at once. Deep calm is at her heart, the stars shine quietly, the sun "sinks down in his tranquility." This tranquility, being in every thing and sending its own deep quiet to restore our hearts, was "in their belief the ineffable calm of God's existence, which spoke to us and redeemed us."

"Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power
That made him; it was blessedness and love."

The third characteristic of the life of the Universe is ceaseless intercommunion founded on the unutterable love which flowed through all things, and with which each thing acted on each other. "The whole world was linked together. Every part, every element, gave and received, honoured and did service to each other. Each plant and hill, cloud and stream, has its own life and character, and they delight in social intercourse like friends who love each other—there is no envy—their best joy is in being kind to one another." This idea is the loveliest of all which Wordsworth introduced into English poetry, and it flowed from his conception of everything in Nature having its own peculiar life. In spring time the whole world gives and receives joy; and earth and sky and man feel their communion each with each:

"Love, now an universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth—
It is the hour of feeling."

The deep underlying thought of all this faith in the love and intercommunion of all things—the thought which makes the Universe Divine—was that this endless interchange of life and joy was in reality the never-ceasing self-reciprocation of God. He divides Himself into a myriad forms, and lives in each distinctly, and makes His own ineffable society and enjoyment by living with Himself from form to form, and by self-communion through infinitely varied activity and beauty, and sacrifice, giving and receiving Himself for ever in the Universe. It makes of Nature a new thing, it makes the commonest walk in the woods a delight, a teaching, a society; if fills the world with life and energy and joy. The education that Nature imparts to man is a religious education—"move along these shades in gentleness of heart; with gentle hand touch—for there is a Spirit in the woods." **This** education, through Communion imparts unworldliness, optimism and joy and is the Natural Religion taught by Jesus.

Here is the May-day lofty. religious experience of the Saint of Natural Religion on one of those heavenly days that cannot die—

"It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea:

Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with His eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child ; dear girl ! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is *not* therefore less divine :
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not."

The world is forwarded by having its attention fixed on the best, when it will be always May—

" One lesson, Nature, let me learn of Thee,
One lesson, that in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties serv'd in one
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—
Of Toil unsever'd from Tranquillity."

I could wish my days to be bound each to each by such natural piety. " In Him we live and move and have our being."

G.V.C.

A Convert's Confession of Faith.

Rev. Homer L. Sheffer, who recently began his pastorate of the Unitarian Church in Athol, Mass., served as a minister for nine years in the Reformed Church in America (Dutch Reformed) before his deposition from the classis of Ulster in the State of New York for heresy on October 6, 1925. He was ordained May 31., 1916, and served Reformed Churches in New York and New Jersey, the last at Saugerties, N.Y.

Mr. Sheffer speaks thus concerning the faith which he found for himself :

" I once signed a formula which has as its purpose keeping this realm of faith static, reduced to dogmas that are burdened with superstition. In a day of immaturity, when my own better judgment weakened before the thought forms other men gave to their faith, I attempted to do the impossible for a thinking man, alive to the stimuli of the environment in which he finds himself.

" I said I would accept and defend the creed of other men of other days living in a different intellectual world. I said it, however, with misgivings. The thing was impossible. I never have found it possible in my most orthodox moments. I should add that I did question my examiners on some points and expressed a different conclusion. However, I never found it possible in my most orthodox moments to bind myself to an authoritative creed.

" My heterodox faith consequently has found expression in my preaching. I do not deny it. I'll go so far as to admit that I probably haven't been as honest as I might have been. But I charge that the very practice of putting one's signature solemnly to a creed of other men, by the very nature of the case, issues in insincerity and dishonesty.

" If . . . . the church is weighing me, I am at the same time weighing the church. I am wondering whether I can be intelligent, honest, and fearless, and stay in the church. Remember again that this questioning comes from one who has been devoted to the church and still wants to be if he can be.

" I don't doubt God. I have faith that somehow I am His son, and that He is in need of my faithfulness to the light which I have. I do, however, seriously doubt the church. I doubt whether the church is not more concerned with her money, her influence, her creeds, her traditions, her peace, with saving her life in this world than with taking up her cross and mounting a new Calvary as did her great Founder. Many earnest men who have tried to do their work in the church have been forced out by the traditions of the church which her priests have counted more sacred than the aspiring search of God's earnest children for truth. . . . The free, inquiring spirit of Christ has been supplanted by the ruts of institutionalism. I doubt whether the church is not bound, for example, hand and foot, as the result of compromises she has made with capitalism, nationalism, war, and superstition."

Mr. Sheffer's doctrinal attitude was completely Unitarian at that time.

This is patent from his outline before the classis of several of his "more important departures from the standards of the Reformed Church" and of his own faith. His dissent was discerning, and his faith was sound and constructive. He said, in brief:

"I believe in one God and only one. Therefore I find it necessary to reject the Trinitarian position. . . . .

"I believe that God lives now in mankind and is manifesting Himself in men. Therefore I reject the conception that He lived only in one man uniquely for all time. I cannot accept the doctrine of the Deity of Christ. . . . In Him I find God more than in any other man. . . . What Christ was, we may be. He stands apart from us only in degree of achievement. I am not unaware that a difference in degree may approach a difference in kind, as for example, the tremendous breach between an idiot and Einstein. . . We shall never come to understand the God whom Christ reveals in His life till we too believe in the same God Christ believed in and worshipped.

"I believe in a God who is Father of us all, and consequently I can't believe in any theory of the atonement. God didn't require of Christ more than He asks of every last one of us—that we be true to the light in us even unto death. Christ together with others met the test. . . . .

"I believe that God is orderly, and therefore I reject the miraculous. . . . We who are familiar with the working of cause and effect are sinning against truth when we talk in terms of magic. .

"I believe God is a living God, who speaks to me just as truly to-day as ever, and perhaps more clearly than he ever did through Isaiah or Jeremiah, and therefore I find it necessary to reject the idea of a specially inspired book. The Bible is only one of a collection of books that tell us about man's attempts to find God and God's attempts to explain to man his destiny. . . . The word of God to our age is the patient research work of His children looking for truth in nature, the laboratories, crowds of men, and in their own minds. Wherever men are toiling, serving, thinking, loving, living, there God is speaking. . . Modern geology and astronomy have . . stretched our imagination so that our ideas of God have to be enlarged. The sciences of biology and anthropology have revealed to us the origin and early life of man. Here, too, we have had to revise our ideas of God.

"I believe in a church that can be true to the high ethical and spiritual ideals of Christ and also true to the enlarging store of present-day revelations of God's truth. . . . My hope is for a church that will interpret the commonplace as it tells of God. We must reject the false distinction between natural and supernatural. The natural has made such inroads upon the so-called supernatural that we can't afford to make the distinction between them. Otherwise we may find ourselves later on becoming out-and-out mechanists. We need to claim all of life as the expression of God. Unless the Christian religion allies itself to the knowledge of to-day, it will lose the adherence of thinking men. Its claims to esoteric knowledge of God which contradict truth as we are learning it to-day is a body blow at the reality it professes to reveal. Objective truth will always be the body of truth that will largely influence thinking men. When the church upholds dogmas contradictory to the plain voice of God in nature, she will suffer the necessary results of obscurantism. She will lose adherents she can ill afford to lose. A true mysticism will never belittle the experience of the senses. Again I hope for a church that will welcome all men as God's children. . . . Everybody who wants to worship God will be welcomed without any other test than his willingness to enter into her life. There will be no strife about creeds and doctrines. . . . A generation will arise to worship in her who will wonder that men could ever have taken the sword and fought each other in the name of God. They will marvel that men once quarrelled with each other over their thoughts about God."

"This church will be a church that seeks the truth consciously, realising that the truth is a goal to be realised

rather than one already attained. . . . She will realise that the way of freedom is the path of truth. She will not try to curb the spirit of free inquiry. She will not talk about agnostics, infidels, heathen, apostates, atheists. She will recognise that all men want nothing more than to see the light through their darkness. She will sympathise with all who crowd her doors because she is truly the Church of God.

"She will speak through her prophets a more universal language of love and sympathy. Her ministers will not denounce each other. They will try to understand each other. Men with deeper insight into truth will lead gently those who find it difficult to understand. There will be profound respect for each other's personality and point of view.

"In this church that is to be, her spiritual purpose will be so much before her that she will treat contemptuously her material prosperity. Yes, as a result, this church will have enemies. There will be those who will condemn her. She will not fight them with their weapons of hate. She will be kind with God's kindness. She will be humble with such humility as characterised the One who pointed the way for the true Church of God.

"The church of the future will follow her prophets. She will not listen to those false priests who urge safety and adherence to the good things of life however shamelessly acquired and used. She will reach the hearts of men even as Jesus did by His earnestness, His hatred of show, His repudiation of privilege, His real love for his fellowmen. She will be earnest, this church of the future. Breadth and tolerance will not be exhibited at the cost of depth. She will inspire high living, noble effort, kindness, justice, humility, service, not for her own sake, but for the sake of the better men and women God's children ought to be. False piety, hypocrisy, false standards, however old and honoured, will give way before her sincerity."—*The Christian Register, April* 1, 1926.

"Outlines of the History of Presbyterianism in Ireland."

By Dr. Henry Montgomery.

Strabane and its Significance for Religion.

Was any man's *opinion* altered? No: but several persons changed their *profession,* who duly received the right hand of orthodox fellowship, who would have been spurned, and persecuted, and reduced to beggary, had they been bold and honest enough to speak the truth! And this was lauded to the skies, as "a glorious *purifying* of the Church." In other words, the Church was *purified,* by doing an act which drove out honest men, and allowed false professors and selfish knaves to remain in her bosom as favoured children. Such, indeed, ever has been and ever must be the effect of Creeds. They are strong enough to exclude honest men; but knaves "cut boldly" and cut through them. A man's Unitarian opinions may be certainly known by his refusing to enter a Trinitarian Church; but the simple fact of his subscribing a Creed which is essential to his obtaining honours and emoluments, is, in itself, no proof that he believes it. Professor Leslie, of Edinburgh, ostentatiously subscribed the Westminster Confession, although he was avowedly a Sceptic; and a late leading member of the General Synod freely took the Trinitarian test at Strabane, although I once saw it declared under the hand of one of his orthodox brethren, that "he must be an Atheist."

These melancholy things too fully show how effectually Churches labour to make men dishonest: and to avoid being a witness of the deplorable havock of conscience which I knew was about to take place at Strabane, I avowed myself to be an Arian, and then obtained permission to retire from the Synod-house during the call of the Roll. In this request I was joined by the late Robert Orr, of Killead, F. Blakely, and S. C. Nelson.

Mr. Blakely well remembers, that he and I walked along the street, with the tears streaming from our eyes, as we mourned over the degradation of our once free Church, and thought of the deplorable scenes which were at that moment passing within the walls of a Meeting-house, in which the most able and most excellent William Dunlop had, for twenty-five years, delivered eloquent lessons of Christian truth and Christian liberty.

Eight ministers, avowedly Arians, remained in the house, but refused to make any declaration, on the just ground that the Synod had no right to demand it, and that the whole affair was an act of usurpation and tyranny. Their names were, I believe, John Mitchell, Robert Campbell, Ephriam Stevenson, Samuel Watson, Alex. Orr, William Finlay, Thos. Alexander, and Arthur Neilson. The two ministers who distinctly voted "Not," were N. Alexander and William Porter. Five honoured Elders did the same, viz., Leonard Dobbin, Armagh, Walter Roberts, Dunmurry, William Orr, Strabane, Wm. Moody, Nt. Limavady, and D. M. Blow, Templepatrick—of whom, the first four have long since departed from this transitory scene.

The melancholy exhibition closed at five o'clock, on the Saturday evening—the crowd rapidly melted away—and the ministers of the Synod, victors and vanquished, came out "in mingled tide," haggard, depressed, and evidently dissatisfied with the deplorable work in which they had been engaged. About two hours afterwards, one of the *professed* believers came into my private room, wrung my hand, and burst into an agony of tears. He was an early and most valued friend; and were it not that farther particulars might cause the individual to be recognised, and inflict pain upon honest living hearts, I could tell a tale of what he said about himself, and others, both actors and sufferers, as affecting as it would be instructive. Some day, it may be told, but I must now forbear.

The week of excitement, anxiety, and sorrows, was followed by a Sunday morning, calm, bright, and refreshing. Human passions had not been able to cast a veil over the glorious sun, or to despoil the fair earth of its sweetness and its beauty. "The very air was balm"—the beasts, the birds, the insects—all were happy, as I journeyed two miles through a delightful country, to worship in the meeting-house of Urney, of which congregation my clear-headed and warm-hearted young friend, James Purss, was then the pastor. He had invited me to preach; but knowing the hateful spirit which had been awakened in the country, I declined, on his account, and he had engaged, in my place, one of the *believers*, of the preceding day, whom, until that moment, I had considered to be as great a heretic as I was myself. Arriving at the meeting-house, before any of my friends had reached it, I turned into "the green," where I saw a considerable crowd, evidently very much on the alert. I soon learned the object of the party; for a rude young farmer instantly advanced and exclaimed—"No man will preach here that denies his Saviour: we thought you were coming, and the pulpit stairs are lined with men to prevent you from getting up." To this courteous salutation, I quietly replied, that "he and his friends had given themselves unnecessary trouble, as I had no desire to cast pearls before swine." At that moment, my co-presbyter, the Rev. John Orr, of Portaferry, came forward and announced that *he* was to preach; but he was instantly informed that "he also had denied Christ." In vain did he repeatedly assert his orthodoxy: the young farmer was inexorable; and although Mr. Purss, who now arrived, confirmed Mr. Orr's statement, John Brown could not be moved—declaring that "he had been himself in Strabane, and knew better." The Rev. Robt. Winning joined his testimony in support of Mr. Orr's orthodoxy; but all was in vain: the crowd would not believe the united evidence of three

orthodox Ministers ; and hinted pretty plainly, that such company rather cast some doubt upon Mr. Purss himself. In the end, Mr. Winning preached two very rational sermons ; and thus had the leaven begun to work in the whole mass of society. One week earlier, and I could have preached at Urney, with perfect acceptance : now, the people gave the lie direct to their own Minister and two of his friends.

The result of this adventure is at once amusing and instructive. When the Synod assembled on the following day, Mr. Orr, being anxious for his reputation, requested the Clerk to state, whether or no, he had expressed his belief in the Doctrine of the Trinity. There could be no doubt of the fact—he *had :* but, lest he should be too proud of his faith, Dr. Cooke looked across the alley, and addressed him in these pleasant and memorable words—"You did say, you believed, Mr. Orr, and I suppose, you are orthodox in your own way ; but *your* orthodoxy is not *my* orthodoxy!" How instructive a commentary was this, upon the proceedings of the previous week! Two learned Divines, having only *one Creed,* had nevertheless *two Orthodoxies* —and *that,* I firmly believe. Thus it is, that Creeds delude the people, by "holding up a uniform testimony to the world," whilst all sorts of *opinions* quietly nestle under their sheltering wings! This is notoriously true, in relation to every creed-bound Church in Christendom : and, at this moment, there is far more actual uniformity of belief, in the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, without any creed save the Bible, than exists in the Irish General Assembly, with its stringent Confession and Catechisms. Creeds, in fact, are of no use, except as cloaks for timeservers and hypocrites ; for, honest men will candidly state their real opinions, and consequently do not require them.

The Calvinistic party calculated, not unnaturally, that their triumph at Strabane had crushed the spirit and annihilated the hopes of Unitarianism. I say, *not unnaturally,* because all sects and parties deceive themselves by supposing that the views and feelings which actuate the ardent supporters by whom they are almost exclusively surrounded, also pervade the entire mass of society. The clamour of the multitude therefore, in Strabane, they mistook for the voice of all Ulster. They saw how easily many unfortunate ministers had been crushed by the terror of the multitude —and they confidently believed, that the few fool-hardy heretics, who had refused, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, to worship the image which Henry Cooke had set up, would be speedily consumed in the fiery furnace of popular indignation. Some of them consequently, in the kindliness of their natures, which were less rigid than their iron creeds, looked upon us with unaffected compassion. As a fair example of this amiable class of practical intolerants with generous hearts, I may adduce the case of my early, esteemed, and still living friend, Richard Dill, of Ballykelly, near Newtownlimavady, as sincere and honest a man, I believe, as ever existed. On their return from Synod, he cordially invited my worthy elder, Walter Roberts, to accept the hospitalities of his pleasant home ; and after much agreeable conversation, he expressed himself in the most gratifying terms with regard to myself—deeply lamenting the unfortunate course which I had pursued, and taking it for granted, that I would not be permitted again to enter the pulpit of Dunmurry. On this point, he was speedily, and, in spite of his Calvinism, I am persuaded, *agreeably* undeceived. My venerable friend truly informed him, that I ran no risk, although an *opposite* course might have exposed me to danger—inasmuch as I was the *fifth* minister under whom he had sat in Dunmurry, and that, without a single exception, they had preached the doctrines of Unitarianism! As the Head of my Session, in years, in worth, in public esteem, in every generous and excellent

quality of head and heart, that good and honoured man, in whose house I first broke bread, when I entered Dunmurry as a stranger and comparative boy, only did justice to the worshipping Society, whose sentiments and interests he so appropriately represented in Strabane. In good truth, I was in no danger: from the highest to the humblest, my people were instructed, liberal, and determined; and I had not the merit of most of my Brethren, in resisting the tyranny of the Synod of Ulster.

So far were subsequent facts from realising the sanguine hopes and confident expectations of our Calvinistic opponents, as to the extinction of Unitarian Christianity, that the proceedings at Strabane gave a sudden impulse to the great principles of truth and liberty, as gratifying as it was important. The Press carried our debates into every house—tracts and pamphlets expository of our opinions were widely circulated—our pulpits awoke from their quiet slumbers of neutrality—and "New Light" literally penetrated the darkest regions of the land. Instead of being annihilated we were merely aroused; and the sudden irruption of our enemies only proved that we had a latent strength in ourselves and a hold upon the public sympathies, upon neither of which we could at all have calculated.

THE END.

Out of the vastness that is God
I summon the power to heal me;
It comes . . . . . with peace ineffable
And patience, to anneal me.

Out of the vastness that is God
I summon the power to still me;
It comes . . . . . from inner depths divine
With destinies that thrill me.

Out of the vastness that is God
I summon the strength to keep me;
And from all fleshy ills that fret
With spirit winds to sweep me.
Ajar I set my soul-doors
Toward unbounded life . . . . .
And lo, infinitudes of power
Flow through me vigour-rife!

Laymen's League.

At the Annual Meeting held on 15th April, in Central Hall, a very cheery report was given of the operations of the League through the year. The Ulster Hall Meeting in November despite very unfavourable weather, still attracted a full house and the service was in every way a decided success. Rev. Herbert Barnes' address was one of the most stimulating and encouraging pronouncements we have had from that platform.

The session was remarkable for the success of the open meetings where addresses by friends lay and clerical outside our own denomination drew large and appreciative audiences. Dr. Robert Watson's talk on "Alcohol and Literature" created an interesting discussion. Rev. R. W. Seaver gave us a very informative address on the position of modernists like himself to those of the Unitarian faith and stressed the points of agreement between all the Churches in their efforts to extend the Kingdom of God.

Professor Davey's talk on Primitive Religions was remarkable for its broad and sympathetic attitude to all religions, by the clear and lucid scholarship shown in his handling of the problems raised by the study of Comparative Religion and especially the survivals in latter day cults of ancient barbaric rites.

Stimulated by these various expressions of opinion by scholars outside our own faith, and desirous of providing some platform in Belfast for such expression, the League are hopeful of securing for our next Ulster Hall Service some outstanding representative of Liberal Christianity, and a serious effort is being made towards the attainment of this object.

Friends wishing to join the League are asked to communicate with the Secretary, J. H. Gilliland, 35 Rosemary Street. We need the co-operation of all who can possibly help as the work before us will be still heavier if we are to maintain and extend the influence of the League.

Obituary.

The Late Rev. T. Dunkerley, B.A.

The remains of the late Rev. Thomas Dunkerley and Mrs. Dunkerley were brought from England to Ireland last week, and on Sunday they were laid to rest in the burial-ground attached to the Comber Church. It was very fitting that they should have their last resting place beside the church where Mr. Dunkerley had ministered for such a long period with great devotion and success. Mrs. Dunkerley also had shared his labours and both were beloved of the people. At the church service the Rev. Glynne Davies paid an eloquent tribute to their memory and he also conducted a brief service at the grave. A large congregation had assembled both in the building and at the graveside, and tears filled many eyes in remembrance of the great loss sustained.

Deep sympathy goes out to their only child, Mr. Harry Dunkerley of Stamford, and his family. His love and devotion for his parents were indeed beautiful and tender; and all who knew them will wish that our heavenly Father will comfort them in their sad bereavement and loss.

Listening In.

Dr. H. Emerson Fosdick

Said "The Bible knows nothing about evolution, just as it knows nothing about automobiles and wireless."

Principal L. P. Jacks.

"Dancing is a thing I have a weakness for. Unfortunately I am too old to dance myself, but I am very fond of watching other people dance, and I can never forget that the parable of the prodigal son ends up with music and dancing, though I doubt if it was a fox trot they danced on that occasion."

Sir Oliver Lodge.

The closing words from a sermon on death (reported in the "Manchester Guardian")—"I tell you that the universe is great and splendid beyond our imagination. Let us not take a pitiful mean outlook. Nothing is too great or too good to be true. We cannot imagine things better than they are. The more you penetrate into the secrets of nature, the more overwhelmed you are with 'wonder, love, and praise.' Our present existence on the planet is but an episode, a temporary adventure to be followed by higher and further adventures. Do not fear. Fear is torment. 'Perfect love casteth out fear.' The universe is ruled by perfect love. That is my message."

"Philemon" on Pessimism.

Heard from 2LO—"Years ago I met a thorough-going pessimist at a little fishing hotel in the wilds of Scotland. Not at all a glum sort of fellow; for, unlike optimists in hours of disappointment, pessimists (who are immune from disappointment) are not glum; the Burmese, who are Buddhists, are delightfully bright and gay; and this man was a charming companion. He was, most fittingly a professor of philosophy. He was also by way of being a poet. His poems were in manuscript; and when I asked him why he had not published them (for they seemed to me to be very good), he replied that he did not wish to encourage the human race even by so much! He had, you see, a sense of humour, as pessimists usually have. It was not worth while, according to his theory, to make any attempt to sustain mankind in life; and the best thing of all would be if the race as one man, should determine to commit suicide . . . . . Yet I did not observe any intention on his part to lead the way by laying violent hands upon himself; he had a robust appetite; and, so far from seeking to bring the unhappy race of men to an end, he had actually done his best to perpetuate it by making himself the father of an exceedingly healthy and ridiculously happy child.

When life comes in at the door, theory flies out of the windows."

P.G.

Temperance Notes.

America Asks Questions.

About the middle of May the American Unitarian Temperance Society are to hold their Annual Meeting in Boston. I have received a letter from the Secretary asking three questions. The Temperance Reformers over there are aware that their experiment with Prohibition is so variously reported and so vigorously debated in other countries that our Unitarian Society wonders how it appears to their nearest of kin, the Unitarians over here. Hence the three questions. These questions are :

(a) What is your estimate of Prohibition in the United States ?
(b) What is your estimate of the liquor problem in England and Ireland ?
(c) What should liberal churches do to help overcome the evils of alcoholism ?

I am doing my best to reply to these, but there will be time for me to collect and forward **your replies** if you would write me before, say the 10th of May. Will you please send me your views and I will summarise and send on to our cousins across the water immediately ? The Annual Meeting is on the 24th

" Wets " and " Drys."

I wonder what some of us think of the American Press ? Though there is much room for improvement in our own daily newspapers yet they are not nearly so sensational as the majority of the American. " Scare lines " are often to be found in letters nearly an inch deep right across the top of a page, and sometimes printed in red ! If we can bear with the language used, can condone the style, yet dare we judge of the morals of its readers ? From the press we might imagine our cousins ' over there ' to be neurotic, hysterical and very loose in morals. But we are not required to judge them from such a source. I do not think it quite true to say that a

Non-subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Bangor Congregation

SERVICE EACH SUNDAY EVENING

At 7 o'clock,

IN

Thompson's Tea Rooms, Main St.

(OPPOSITE POST OFFICE)

Minister : Rev. A. Whitford, Moneyrea.

Hon, Treasurer :
Mr. T. LILLIE,
6 Bingham St., Bangor.

Hon. Secretary :
Mr. GEORGE HILL,
45 Ballyholme Esplanade.

people get a press that they deserve. I remember once reading a very "blood curdling" story of Red Indians and Spanish cut-throats in a school magazine. I discovered the author to be a very mild little boy, very lame in school and the playground, and one who could not say boo ! to a goose ! There may be no connection between this, the American press, and its people, but somehow one recalled the other. The papers are always on the alert for "copy."—this of course is universal—but the "capital" made out of the "copy" is surely unique in America. Just now, as you probably know, the United States Senate have appointed a "Prohibition Investigation Committee" and are receiving evidence from witnesses for the 'wets' and the "drys." Most of us will patiently await for the official report of the proceedings. It is quite evident that nothing can be learnt from the stunt press reports.

Our Drink Bill.

In these days when money is needed by Government more than ever before, and when there is the heaviest unemployment on record, it is nothing less than appalling to contemplate our huge Drink Bill. True, it is estimated at a little lower for 1925 than 1924—£315,000,000 as against £316,000,000. Alongside that figure let us see what we spend on our other national concerns—we will place the "Drink" item again.

Wine, Spirits and Beer	£315,000,000
Public Education ..	86,600,000
Unemployment ..	50,000,000
Poor Law Relief ..	46,000,000
National Health Insurance	34,000,000
Old Age Pensions	27,000,000
Widows and Orphans and Old Age Pensions (Contributory) ..	26,000,000
Housing of Working Classes	16,500,000
Workmen's Compensation	12,000,000
Public Health Acts ..	9,600,000

All these items added together are exceeded by the Drink Bill by £8,000,000 !

This £315,000,000 is equal to about £7 5s. per head of the population, or £35 a year per average family, i.e., 13/6 a week. But do not forget some of us would not spend so much as a penny on the stuff.

Next Month.

We will have something to say about Prohibition in America next month ; but in the meantime let us assure some anxious ones, that in spite of what you may read as press predictions.—**"There is not the slightest likelihood that the country will ever repeal the Prohibition Laws**—we all know this." This from Bishop William T. Manning of New York after much study to the question and carefully considering the evidence given before the first mentioned Investigation Committee by the "Wets" and "Drys." P.G.

A Mill-Isle Man.

From the Ards Peninsula some good men have gone out into the world, and made a name for themselves and those who have come after them. President Wilson's family hailed from the Ards, and in recent years from a village school, near the centre of the peninsula, one who rose to high position in the Government of India, and now bears a title. Another, whose home was at Mill-Isle, Dr. Cousins, was for a time head of the Civil Service Department of the High School, Dublin, and was demonstrator in physical geography and geology to such famous authorities as the late Professor Herbertson of Oxford, and Professor Glenville Cole in a teacher's course in the Royal College of Science for Ireland. He became Principal of Madanpalle College, India, when it was a constituent part of the National University. He was, while in Dublin, on cordial terms with the Unitarian Church, Stephen's Green, and thought well of its teaching.

In 1919 he was invited to Japan as special Professor of Modern English

Poetry by the Keiogijuku University of Tokyo for a year. His work there attracted some attention not only in the University but also in China and America, where the press reported his public lectures in extenso from the Japanese newspapers. The University rewarded him with the degree of Doctor of Literature. Dr. Cousins was the first, and is still, the only foreigner to be given that distinction. After his return to India he was transferred to the National University at Adyar. To his close interest in education Dr. Cousins adds a natural gift of literary expression. As a poet and dramatist of the Irish renaissance his works are regarded as second only in quality to those of the great leaders of the movement, Yeats and A.E. In India he is also known as one of the chief advocates of the revival of pure Indian art and literature.

Mrs. Cousins is a brilliant musician and organiser of Women's Movements in India, and is the first woman magistrate in India. U.

Reports.

Comber.—The Annual Congregational Meeting was held on March 30th. The Right Hon. John M. Andrews, D.L., M.P., Minister of Labour presided over a very satisfactory attendance. Mr. Andrews was glad to say that the church was never more prosperous than it was at present, the reports showed that a record had been created, there being a credit balance in every branch of the church finances. This was the more satisfactory as they had executed all needful repairs to the church and manse. Mr. F. J. Orr, read the Hon. Secretary's report and Mr. James Simpson submitted the Hon. Treasurer's account. The Incidental, Sunday School and Choir Funds all showed a substantial credit balance. Mr. Alex. Orr, in moving a vote of thanks to the minister (Rev. Glynn Davies) paid a warm tribute to his services both in the pulpit and in his pastoral work. He also included Mrs. Davies, bearing testimony to her many useful activities in the church and town. Mr. Davies, in his reply, referred to the splendid loyalty of the Sunday School teachers, whose excellent services were bearing fruit in a steadily increasing membership and attendance year by year. One of the most hopeful signs was the large number of children and young people who were so regular in their attendance, not only at the Sunday School, but also at the Church services. He thanked the parents for the encouragement they gave to the young people in this respect. It was gratifying to note that a good number of new subscribers had been enrolled during the year. The medals, certificates, and books to the members of the League of Loyalty were presented by Mrs. Hugh Ferguson. The Misses M. Frame and M. Neill received gold medals for five years' unbroken attendance. A musical and varied programme followed. A playlet was given by six junior members of the League of Loyalty, and a "Charade," by W. W. Jacobs was given by the "Unity Players." Songs were effectively rendered by Mrs. Hugh Ferguson and Mr. Harry M'Cormick. Mrs. R. Ferguson played the accompaniments and the plays were produced by Mrs. Davies. Tea was provided by Mrs. Thomas Andrews who is unfailing in her love and generosity to the church. It was reported in connection with the newly-formed branch of the Women's League that the membership had already reached the total of sixty-three. The proceedings terminated with the singing of the National Anthem.

* *

Domestic Mission.—A very pleasant afternoon was spent at the Belfast Domestic Mission, Stanhope Street, on Monday, March 29th, when the First Church Branch of the Women's League entertained the Stanhope St. Branch to tea on the occasion of their closing meeting for this session. The hostesses were Mrs. Rossington, Mrs. Boyd, Mrs. Gilliland, Miss Ritchie, Miss Laird and Miss Armstrong. Mrs.

Robert Campbell, also contributed to the tea. The tables were decorated with daffodils and laurestina, tea being served at 4 p.m. Songs were rendered by Mrs. Sam Ervine and Miss Nancy Kane, dances by Miss Letty Dunlop and monologues by Mrs. E. R. Jackson, Miss Violet Curran officiating at the piano. Mrs. Harry Jackson proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the tea-makers and the entertainers which was ably seconded by Mrs. Magee. The singing of Auld Lang Syne brought the meeting to a close. On Saturday, April 10th, the Mountpottinger Band of Hope gave an entertainment. Evidently the night was an unsuitable one for the members of the mission, but an appreciative audience was gathered in from the streets so that the juvenile performers should not be disappointed.

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Downpatrick.—The Church's Annual Social Reunion was held on Wednesday, April 7th, in the Assembly Hall. Before tea was served the hall was well filled, and ere long there was scarcely room to accommodate all who came.

Rev. John Begg, accompanied on the platform by Mr. H. Dickson, treasurer, and Mr. J. F. Cochrane, Secretary, spoke of the need for the deepening of the religious life within the Church. He felt he was justified in thinking that there were evidences here of increasing interest in spiritual welfare. They had been actively engaged in many concerns for the church; amongst others, they had erected a memorial tablet within the building as a tribute of their regard for the men who served and suffered in the great war. There were some, he felt sure who were with them in spirit that evening, and particularly he had in mind their much-esteemed and greatly-respected friend and adviser, Mr. S. C. N. Lowry, who had gone to live in Belfast. Reference was also made to the absence of Mr. T. Corry through serious illness, and of the Misses Jordan on account of the illness of their mother. In conclusion, he declared his belief in the spirit of friendship as a factor not only in the fostering of the best church life but as means whereby the kingdom of God might be realised on earth. A varied and interesting programme was then carried through by the scholars of the Sunday School, who had been trained by Miss Jordan. Songs, recitations, and pianoforte solos were rendered by friends and members of the church, and a farcical sketch, entitled: "Sally's Peppermints," given by the young people of the congregation, was greatly enjoyed. During an interval prizes were distributed by Mrs. Begg to the Sunday School scholars. Special prizes, generously given by Miss R. Cochrane and Miss M. Jordan, for best attendance of scholars at church during the year were won by Dorothy Newell, Lelia Killops, D. Lowry, E. Dickson, and W. Garrett. The prize, given by Mrs. T. R. M'Culloch, of Glasgow, and presented this year for proficiency in general class-work was won by Marie Henry. Other receivers of book prizes were as follows:—Girls: M. Stewart, Lilian Kelly, H. M'Mullan, A. Cusack, M. Cusack, G. Cusack, E. Dickson, A. Corry, M. Corry, M. Galway, Madge Galway, B. Galway, B. Dickson, M. Henry, B. Henry, L. Killops, L. Savage, A. Seay, A. Neill, M. Dick, R. Dick, D. Newell, G. Seay, F. Black, A. Hughes, D. Hughes, L. Ferris, E. Kinnear, E. Alexander, D. Emerson, M. Hutton, M. Moffett, D. Stanford, W. Kinnear, E. Ferguson, R. Ferris, M. Nesbitt, V. Strain, M. Strain, W. Moffett, and M. Ferris. Boys: J. Dickson, G. Dickson, C. Hayes, E. Hughes, W. Lowry, D. Lowry, H. Lowry, C. Lowry, J. Hayes, A. Kelly, W. Corry, J. Corry, R. Kelly, W. Cusack, G. Cusack, M. Seay, W. M'Mullan, W. Garrett, J. Quinn, H. Hayes, T. Hayes, G. Neill, J. Galway, G. Seay, C. Newell, W. M'Mullan, A. Corry, J. Black, W. Black, J. Ferris, J. Huddleston, W. Ferris, J. Stanford, S. Taylor, F. Taylor, and H. Strain. A vote of thanks to the ladies who had assisted

in the work of the entertainment and to the artistes was proposed by Mr. J. Newman, and seconded by Mr. C. Stewart, and with the singing of the National Anthem a happy evening was brought to a close.

* *

Killinchy.—The Young Players of this congregation gave a delightful rendering of the popular comedy--"The Pope in Killybuck," in aid of Ardmillan Orange Hall, on Friday and Saturday, 26th and 27th March, to a large and appreciative audience on both nights. The characters were ably sustained by Messrs. Jim Osborne, James Stewart, Frank Bishop, J. H. Fitchie, Gerwyn Williams, Willie Binks, Wm. Stewart and Frank Osborne, Miss M. Orr and Miss Susan Osborne. These Young Players have become very popular. The music was supplied by Mrs. Ellison and the Misses Ellison. The members of the Lodge, are much indebted to all for their generous aid freely given, and also to the Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., for having kindly lent the scenery.

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Mountpottinger.—The month of March produced a number of activities.

On Friday the 19th, the Band of Hope gave a very successful entertainment in the school-room when all the members took part in two little musical sketches entitled " Brown Mouse " and " The Old Woman in the Shoe." Whilst solos were rendered by Miss A. Beattie in her best manner, Miss D. Young carried out the duties of painist with much success. Recitations which were much enjoyed were given by certain junior members, and Miss N. Allen the leader is with her helpers to be much congratulated on the result attained. Thanks are due to Mrs. R. M'Cullough and Miss M. M'Donald who assisted behind the scenes, but it was a matter for regret that Miss Bessie Orr who had trained the performers in elocution should have been removed to hospital a few days previously and was thus deprived of seeing the result of her work. On Sunday, March 21st the third musical service of the winter season was held, when Miss Jean Bennett was the soloist whilst the Rugby Male Voice Quartette who came at very short notice were heard to much advantage. We again welcomed Mr. J. A. Porter and Mr. R. Trevisani whose solos on the Aeola and Violincello were much appreciated. These two instrumentalists joined with our organist at the piano in a couple of trios. The Choir rendered two anthems in pleasing style and showed that they had worked hard. On Wednesday, March 24th the concluding congregational social was held when a very pleasant evening was spent. The Church Committee nominated Messrs. H. Beattie, L. Watters, W. W. Wilson, and E. R. Jackson to co-operate with the nominees of the Women's League who were Mrs. J. Allen, Mrs. H. Beattie, Mrs. Cowan and Mrs. E. R. Jackson. These eight members acted as hosts and hostesses. It is worthy of note that the Wayside Pulpit was inaugurated in March. The Church Committee are indebted to Mr. J. M'Ilwrath who has made a very fine board which has been suitably lettered and occupies a prominent position on the Church steps during the week. There is ample evidence that it is causing much interest in the neighbourhood.

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Newtownards.—At the Graduation Ceremony held last month in the Queen's University, there were conferred upon John Kane Murphy, the degrees M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O. Dr. Murphy was formerly secretary of our Church here and his relations have been for generations connected with this congregation as well as with the neighbouring one of Greyabbey. We congratulate Dr. Murphy on his success and wish him a bright and prosperous career.

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Templepatrick.—It will be of interest to many friends of the Templepatrick congregation to learn that Dr. Hugh Nelson Turner has entered the Colonial Medical Service and has been stationed as first assistant medical officer in the

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Seychelles Islands. Prior to leaving home to take up his new duties he had spent six months as house-surgeon in the Bradford Royal Infirmary. Dr. Alfred C. Turner, sometime house-surgeon of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, and later of the West London Hospital, has entered the Indian Civil Service and has been appointed by the Department to its service in Teheran, North Persia. Two other appointments go with the Department's appointment, viz., the Indo-European Telegraph Co., and the Imperial Bank of Persia. Dr. Turner is about to sail from Marseilles to Beirut from which place he will drive a motor car to Jerusalem and thence over Mount Lebanon to Damascus and via Bagdad to Teheran, a distance of eight hundred miles, part of the journey across mountain ranges but mostly through the desert. The best wishes accompany both these young men in their new spheres of occupation.

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